

Ephesians

Ephesians in the Heart

Lesson #14 for September 30, 2023

Scriptures: Ephesians 1-6.

1. As we finish this series on the book of Ephesians, let us review what we have studied.

[From the Bible study guide=BSG:] Visitors to London climb on board the London Eye, a Ferris-wheel-like attraction. From 450 feet above the River Thames, you can see it all: Big Ben, the Houses of Parliament, and the many historic palaces and cathedrals. For New Testament scholar Nicholas Thomas “Tom” Wright, “the letter to the Ephesians stands in relation to the rest of Paul’s letters rather like the London Eye. It isn’t the longest or fullest of his writings, but it offers a breathtaking view of the entire landscape. From here, as the wheel turns, you get a bird’s-eye view of one theme after another.”—*Paul for Everyone: The Prison Letters* (London: S.P.C.K. [Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge Publishing], 2004), p. 3.

In Ephesians, Paul is not focused on issues of local concern. The letter reads as though Paul were addressing believers everywhere and Christian churches wherever they exist. The letter’s timeless feel allows the “breathtaking view” Paul offers to invade our own world and thought. As we review each chapter, let’s keep this question in mind: What important truths embedded in Ephesians should continue to shape our lives as believers?—*Adult Sabbath School Bible Study Guide** for Sabbath Afternoon, September 23.†Ω§

2. Ephesians is one of the key books in our understanding of the great controversy over the character and government of God. At the very beginning of this book which was written from prison to the church members in western Asia Minor (modern Turkey), Paul rises to new heights of insight.

Ephesians 1:8b-10: ^{8b} In all his wisdom and insight ⁹God did what he had purposed, and made known to us the secret plan he had already decided to complete by means of Christ. ¹⁰This plan, which God will complete when the time is right, is to **bring all creation together**, everything in heaven and on earth, with Christ as head.—American Bible Society. (1992). *The Holy Bible: The Good News Translation** (2nd ed., Ephesians 1:8b-10). New York: American Bible Society [abbreviated as *Good News Bible*].†‡

3. Colossians, a parallel book to Ephesians and written at the same time, gives us additional insight.

Colossians 1:19-20: ¹⁹For it was by God’s own decision that the Son has in himself the full nature of God. ²⁰**Through the Son, then, God decided to bring the whole universe back to himself. God made peace through his Son’s blood** [footnote: *his Son’s blood; or his Son’s sacrificial death.*] **on the cross and so brought back to himself all things, both on earth and in heaven.**—*Good News Bible*.*†‡§ [How does that happen?]+

[From the writings of Ellen G. White=EGW:] **Through the plan of salvation a larger purpose is to be wrought out even than the salvation of man and the redemption of the earth. Through the revelation of the character of God in Christ, the beneficence of the divine government would be manifested before the universe, the charge of Satan refuted, the nature and results of sin made plain, and the perpetuity of the law fully demonstrated.**—Ellen G. White, *The Signs of the Times*,* February 13, 1893, par. 12; *The Messenger*,*€ June 7, 1893, par. 5; *Bible Echoes*,*€ July 15, 1893, par. 3; *The Signs of the Times*,*€ December 22, 1914, par. 4; *That I May Know Him**€ 366.4.†

[EGW:] **But the plan of redemption had a yet broader and deeper purpose than the salvation of man.** It was not for this alone that Christ came to the earth; it was not merely that the inhabitants of this little world might regard the law of God as it should be regarded; but **it was to vindicate the character of God before the universe.** To this result of His great sacrifice—its influence upon the intelligences of other worlds, as well as upon man—the Saviour looked forward when just before His crucifixion He said: “Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out. And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all unto Me.” John 12:31, 32. The act of Christ in dying for the salvation of man would not only make heaven accessible to men, but before all the universe it would justify God and His Son in their dealing with the rebellion of Satan. It would establish the perpetuity of the law of God and would reveal the nature and the results of sin.—Ellen G. White, *Patriarchs and Prophets** 68.2-69.0 [1890]; *Reflecting Christ***€ 50.3 [RC* inserts the word *men* (without italics) in “will draw all unto Me”] [1985].† [What could the angels in heaven possibly learn from us?]

[EGW:] By coming to dwell with us, Jesus was to reveal God both to men and to angels.... Not alone for His earthborn children was this revelation given. **Our little world is the lesson book of the universe.** God’s wonderful purpose of grace, the mystery of redeeming love, is the theme into which “angels desire to look,” [1 Peter 1:12] and **it will be their study throughout endless ages.**—Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages** 19.2 [1898]; *Reflecting Christ** 15.4 [1985].† Compare *Amazing Grace* 45.3; *Last Day Events* 31.1; *Our Father Cares* 200.3.

[EGW:] To the angels and the unfallen worlds the cry, “It is finished,” had a deep significance. It was for them as well as for us that the great work of redemption had been accomplished....

Not until the death of Christ was the character of Satan clearly revealed to the angels or to the unfallen worlds. The archapostate had so clothed himself with deception that even holy beings had not understood his principles. They had not clearly seen the nature of his rebellion.—Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages** 758.2-3 [1898].† [Think about Satan’s predicament when Jesus was born: Every person who had lived on this earth up to that point had become a sinner. Satan was sure that he and his

associates would be able to get Jesus to sin. However, if he could not get Jesus to sin, he planned to make His life so difficult that He would give up on His mission to this earth and just return to heaven and leave us humans to our fate. Having failed in both of those goals, Satan and his angels were determined to keep Jesus in the tomb. They claimed that the dead were their property. When Jesus arose in His own power from the grave at His Father's call, Satan knew that his final end was fixed. The universe watching Satan's actions no longer had any questions about Satan's character or about God's character.][‡]

4. Already, in Ephesians 1, Paul suggested that the scene covers the full span of salvation history, from eternity past, through God's grace-filled actions in Christ, to eternity future.
5. Can you think of another place in Scripture where the great controversy is covered from beginning to end? Consider Revelation 12-14.
6. As Paul took on this panoramic view of history and salvation, he broke into praise.

Ephesians 1:15-19: ¹⁵ For this reason, ever since I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all God's people, ¹⁶I have not stopped giving thanks to God for you. I remember you in my prayers ¹⁷and ask the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, to give you the Spirit, who will make you wise and reveal God to you, so that you will know him. ¹⁸I ask that your minds may be opened to see his light, so that you will know what is the hope to which he has called you, how rich are the wonderful blessings he promises his people, ¹⁹and how very great is his power at work in us who believe. This power working in us is the same as the mighty strength ²⁰which he used when he raised Christ from death and seated him at his right side in the heavenly world.—*Good News Bible*.* [The story of Jesus proves God's ability to carry out what Jesus promised us.][‡]

7. ***How has the life and death of Jesus affected your life? How could the life and death of Someone who lived 2000 years ago affect our lives in the 21st century? Can other people see that we are Christians? Has your understanding of the great controversy affected your life? If so, why? How do you feel about being chosen by God from before this world was created?***
8. ***What was God's original plan for the human race? We all should be living in an expanded version of the Garden of Eden! What percentage of the 7 billion people living on this earth have any idea about the great controversy and its implications? How should it affect us to realize that we can be adopted into the universe-wide family of God, to live forever around the throne of God?***

Ephesians 1:10: This plan, which God will complete when the time is right, is to bring all creation together, everything in heaven and on earth, with Christ as head.—*Good News Bible*.*[†]

Ephesians 2:1-4: ¹ In the past you were spiritually dead because of your disobedience and sins. ²At that time you followed the world's evil way; you obeyed the ruler of the spiritual powers in space, the spirit who now controls the people who disobey God. ³Actually all of us were like them and lived

according to our natural desires, doing whatever suited the wishes of our own bodies and minds. In our natural condition we, like everyone else, were destined to suffer God's anger.

⁴ But God's mercy is so abundant, and his love for us is so great,—*Good News Bible*.*

Ephesians 2:8-9: ⁸⁻⁹For it is by God's grace that you have been saved through faith. It is not the result of your own efforts, but God's gift, so that no one can boast about it.—*Good News Bible*.*

Ephesians 2:11-12: ¹¹ You Gentiles by birth—called “the uncircumcised” by the Jews, who call themselves “the circumcised” (which refers to what men do to their bodies)—remember what you were in the past. ¹²At that time you were apart from Christ. You were foreigners and did not belong to God's chosen people. You had no part in the covenants, which were based on God's promises to his people, and you lived in this world without hope and without God.—*Good News Bible*.*

John 1:13: They did not become God's children by natural means, that is, by being born as the children of a human father; God himself was their Father.—*Good News Bible*.*

[BSG:] It turns out we were wrong about God in all these aspects. When God opened His mysteries before Paul, Paul was shocked. For this reason, although the entire epistle is describing this mystery from different perspectives, the apostle returns, in the center of the epistle, to calling it “the mystery” (*Eph. 3:3, 9*) and “the mystery of Christ” (*Eph. 3:4*), and, at the end of his letter, “the mystery of the gospel” (*Eph. 6:19, NASB*). **This mystery is all the more valuable, Paul explains, when we realize that it was hidden from the people in the past centuries and millennia, and God chose Paul's generation to live in that unique historical time when that mystery of mysteries was fully revealed for all to see (*Eph. 3:9; Rom. 16:25; 1 Cor. 2:7; Col. 1:26, 27; Col. 2:2*). What a privilege, what glory!**—*Adult Teachers Sabbath School Bible Study Guide** 185.^{†‡§}

9. In **Ephesians 2**, Paul recognized that we were once sinners, controlled by our natural desires, doing whatever we felt like doing. In that condition, God could not save us to live in a perfect universe.
10. Paul went on, saying that God has brought together people from all parts of the world. He has broken down the wall that separated us and kept us enemies. We have the opportunity to become fellow citizens with God's universe-wide family. We are even described as building blocks in the temple of which Christ is the chief cornerstone.

[BSG:] “But God. . . .” Those two words must be the most hope-filled ones known to humankind. In Ephesians 2:1–10, Paul describes the grim past of his audience. Sharing the plight of all humanity, they were bent toward rebellion against God, their lives dominated by sin and Satan (*Eph. 2:1–3*). “But God, who is rich in mercy” And what did God do for them and for us? (1) He made us alive with Christ—Christ's resurrection is our own. (2) He raised us up with Christ—Christ's ascension is our own. (3) In heaven,

He seated us with Christ—Christ’s coronation is our own (*Eph. 2:4–7*). We are not just bystanders to the cosmos-shifting events of Christ’s life! God takes these remarkable actions, not because of any merit in us but because of His grace (*Eph. 2:8, 9*), and He intends believers to live in solidarity with Jesus and practice “good works” (*Eph. 2:10*).—*Adult Sabbath School Bible Study Guide** for Monday, September 25.†§

11. Could we actually be a part of God’s remarkable actions, the world-transforming events beginning with the life of Christ and leading to eternal salvation?

Ephesians 2:8-10: ⁸⁻⁹For it is by God’s grace that you have been saved through faith. It is not the result of your own efforts, but God’s gift, so that no one can boast about it. ¹⁰God has made us what we are, and in our union with Christ Jesus he has created us for a life of good deeds, which he has already prepared for us to do.—*Good News Bible*.*

[BSG:] Ephesians 2:8–10 has played a role in the conversion of many. Martin Luther found in these verses a grace that won his heart, and he discovered as well some central affirmations of the Reformation: salvation comes by faith alone, through grace alone, by Christ alone, and to the glory of God alone. **In 1738, eighteen days after experiencing conversion in London’s Aldersgate Street, John Wesley preached at Oxford University, offering “a cry from the heart” and “the manifesto of a new movement.” His text? Ephesians 2:8.** [See just above and item #8 above.] (See A. Skevington Wood, “Strangely Warmed: The Wesleys and the Evangelical Awakening,” *Christian History* [magazine], vol. 5, no. 1 [1984]).—*Adult Sabbath School Bible Study Guide** for Monday, September 25.†‡§

12. How did your conversion affect you? How much did your life change?

13. **In Ephesians 3, Paul focused on the secret mystery that has now been revealed about God’s blessings and how we can become members of the same body which Jesus Christ established.**

Ephesians 3:7-10: ⁷ I was made a servant of the gospel by God’s special gift, which he gave me through the working of his power. ⁸ I am less than the least of all God’s people; yet God gave me this privilege of taking to the Gentiles the Good News about the infinite riches of Christ, ⁹ and **of making all people see how God’s secret plan is to be put into effect.** God, who is the Creator of all things, kept his secret hidden through all the past ages, ¹⁰ in order that at the present time, by means of the church, the angelic rulers and powers in the heavenly world might learn of his wisdom in all its different forms.—*Good News Bible*.*† [Try to imagine someone raised as a Pharisee, rejoicing that he was able to spread the gospel to Gentiles!]‡

14. In Ephesians 3, Paul tried to summarize God’s mysterious plan, as outlined in the Bible study guide.

- In eternity, God conceives of “the mystery” or “the plan” about the church (*Eph. 3:3–5, 9, 11*).

- Through the life and death of Jesus, that long-hidden plan is “accomplished” (*Eph. 3:11, NKJV; compare Eph. 2:11–22*).
- By revelation, Paul learns “the mystery” of the church and the astonishing fact that Gentiles are to be full partners in it (*Eph. 3:3–6*).
- Paul participates in spreading this good news as preacher to the Gentiles of “the unsearchable riches of Christ” (*Eph. 3:8, 9*).
- With many won to Christ, the church, composed as it is of both Jews and Gentiles, displays “the manifold wisdom of God” to “the principalities and powers in the heavenly places” (*Eph. 3:10, NKJV*), announcing their coming doom (*compare Eph. 6:10–20*). The plan to unite all things in Christ (*Eph. 1:10*) is underway, and their time is short.—*Adult Sabbath School Bible Study Guide** for Tuesday, September 26.[§]

[EGW:] “The prince of this world cometh,” said Jesus, “and hath nothing in Me.” John 14:30. There was in Him nothing that responded to Satan’s sophistry. He did not consent to sin. Not even by a thought did He yield to temptation. So it may be with us. Christ’s humanity was united with divinity; He was fitted for the conflict by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. And **He came to make us partakers of the divine nature.** [What does that mean?] So long as we are united to Him by faith, sin has no more dominion over us. God reaches for the hand of faith in us to direct it to lay fast hold upon the divinity of Christ, that we may attain to perfection of character.

And how this is accomplished, Christ has shown us. By what means did He overcome in the conflict with Satan? By the word of God. Only by the word could He resist temptation. “**It is written,**” **He said.** And unto us are given “exceeding great and precious promises: **that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature,** having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.” 2 Peter 1:4. Every promise in God’s word is ours. “By every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God” are we to live. When assailed by temptation, look not to circumstances or to the weakness of self, but to the power of the word. All its strength is yours. “Thy word,” says the psalmist, “have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against Thee.” “By the word of Thy lips I have kept me from the paths of the destroyer.” Psalm 119:11; 17:4.—Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages** 123.3-4.^{††}

15. How has the life and death of Jesus affected the rest of the universe?

[EGW:] That which alone can effectually restrain from sin in this world of darkness, will prevent sin in heaven. The significance of the death of Christ will be seen by saints and angels.... The angels ascribe honor and glory to Christ, for even they are not secure except by looking to the sufferings of the Son of God. It is through the efficacy of the cross that the angels of heaven are guarded from apostasy. **Without the cross they would be no more secure against evil than were the angels before the fall of Satan. Angelic perfection failed in heaven....** The plan of salvation, making manifest the justice and love of God, provides **an eternal safeguard**

against defection in unfallen worlds, as well as among those who shall be redeemed by the blood of the Lamb.—Ellen G. White, *The Signs of the Times*,* December 30, 1889, par. 4; *SDA Bible Commentary*,* vol. 5, 1132.8-9.†† Compare *Our High Calling* 45.4; *SDA Bible Commentary*, vol. 7a, 476.3.††

16. **Why did the angels need the “message of the cross”?**

[EGW:] For centuries God looked with patience and forbearance upon the cruel treatment given to his ambassadors, at his holy law prostrate, despised, trampled underfoot. He swept away the inhabitants of the Noachian world with a flood. But when the earth was again peopled, men drew away from God, and renewed their hostility to him, manifesting bold defiance. Those whom God rescued from Egyptian bondage followed in the footsteps of those who had preceded them. Cause was followed by effect; the earth was being corrupted.

A crisis had arrived in the government of God.... All heaven was prepared at the word of God to move to the help of his elect. One word from him, and the bolts of heaven would have fallen upon the earth, filling it with fire and flame. God had but to speak, and there would have been thunderings and lightnings and earthquakes and destruction.

The heavenly intelligences were prepared for a fearful manifestation of Almighty power. Every move was watched with intense anxiety. The exercise of justice was expected. The angels looked for God to punish the inhabitants of the earth.... [They expected God to clean up this world!]

The heavenly universe was amazed at God’s patience and love. To save fallen humanity the Son of God took humanity upon himself.—Ellen G. White, *Review and Herald*,* July 17, 1900, par. 4-7.†† Compare *The Desire of Ages* 37.2.

[EGW:] For centuries God bore with the inhabitants of the old world. But at last guilt reached its limit.... He came out of His place to punish the inhabitants of the earth, and by a flood cleansed the earth of its iniquity.

Notwithstanding this terrible lesson, men had no sooner begun to multiply once more, than rebellion and vice became widespread. Satan seemed to have taken control of the world. **The time came that a change must be made, or the image of God would be wholly obliterated from the hearts of the beings He had created.** All heaven watched the movements of God with intense interest. Would He once more manifest His wrath? Would He destroy the world by fire? The angels thought that the time had come to strike the blow of justice, when, lo, to their wondering vision was unveiled the plan of salvation.—Ellen G. White, *Manuscript 22*,* January 10, 1890, from Ellen White’s diary in *The Ellen G. White 1888 Materials** 569.2-570.0.††

17. **Is it possible that Paul’s prayer as well as the prayer of Jesus Christ recorded in John 17 could apply to us as individuals and as a church?**

18. What barriers still separate Christians from each other? How can those barriers be broken down?

19. In **Ephesians 4**, Paul talked about what needed/needs to happen to transform the church.

Ephesians 4:1-6: ¹ I urge you, then—I who am a prisoner because I serve the Lord: live a life that measures up to the standard God set when he called you. ²Be always humble, gentle, and patient. Show your love by being tolerant with one another. ³Do your best to preserve the unity which the Spirit gives by means of the peace that binds you together. ⁴There is one body and one Spirit, just as there is one hope to which God has called you. ⁵There is one Lord, one faith, one baptism; ⁶there is one God and Father of all, who is Lord of all, works through all, and is in all.—*Good News Bible*.*

20. After God has gone to incredible lengths to make this plan of salvation work, this is what can happen.

Ephesians 4:13-16: ¹³And so we shall all come together to that oneness in our faith and in our knowledge of the Son of God; we shall become mature people, reaching to the very height of Christ's full stature. ¹⁴Then we shall no longer be children, carried by the waves and blown about by every shifting wind of the teaching of deceitful people, who lead others into error by the tricks they invent. ¹⁵Instead, by speaking the truth in a spirit of love, we must grow up in every way to Christ, who is the head. ¹⁶Under his control all the different parts of the body fit together, and the whole body is held together by every joint with which it is provided. So, when each separate part works as it should, the whole body grows and builds itself up through love.—*Good News Bible*.*†

21. Paul was aware of the evils that pervaded Ephesus and the surrounding cities and communities. It was time for the Christian churches to stand out as beacons of light.

22. God's plan to make us all one is wonderful and certain to eventually take place. However, it will involve much work between now and then. Every member of the church is supposed to be gifted and use that gift to prepare others for life eternal. Are we doing that?

23. As Paul prepared to conclude this marvelous book, he stated in **Ephesians 5**:

Ephesians 5:1-5: ¹ Since you are God's dear children, you must try to be like him. ²Your life must be controlled by love, just as Christ loved us and gave his life for us as a sweet-smelling offering and sacrifice that pleases God. ³ Since you are God's people, it is not right that any matters of sexual immorality or indecency or greed should even be mentioned among you. ⁴Nor is it fitting for you to use language which is obscene, profane, or vulgar. Rather you should give thanks to God. ⁵You may be sure that no one who is immoral, indecent, or greedy (for greed is a form of idolatry) will ever receive a share in the Kingdom of Christ and of God.—*Good News Bible*.*†

[BSG:] If you start reading Ephesians 5 at its beginning, you may miss the full power of an important theme. So, start instead with Ephesians 4:32, in which Paul tells the Ephesians to "be kind one to another, tenderhearted,

forgiving one another, even as God in Christ forgave you” (NKJV).—*Adult Sabbath School Bible Study Guide** for Thursday, September 28.†§

24. As Paul discussed the Christian effects on marriage, parenting, and human slavery, we recognize that there should be a total transformation of society. This will be possible only by the return of Christ to this world.

[BSG:] Paul extends his theme of imitating God’s love as he advises Christian husbands and wives. Christ’s self-sacrificing love for the church becomes the model for Christian husbands (*Eph. 5:25–33*), while the loyalty of the church toward Christ becomes the model for Christian wives (*Eph. 5:22–24*). Rather than using the gift of human sexuality in a debauched and selfish way, a Christian husband and wife focus on valuing and treasuring each other, becoming “one flesh” (*Eph. 5:28–33*).

“Be imitators of God as dear children” (*Eph. 5:1, NKJV*). By God’s grace, you are called today to live out that exhortation in your relationships with others.—*Adult Sabbath School Bible Study Guide** for Thursday, September 28.†§

25. How would a truly Christian marriage look if husbands and wives did as Paul suggested? We believe that Paul was married at one time. Being married was typically required of members of the Sanhedrin. Scholars believe that Paul was, at one time, a married member of the Sanhedrin since he voted against Stephen. (See Acts 8:1.)
26. As we have already studied in **Ephesians 6**, Paul talked about how the church will eventually be transformed into an army “waging peace.” He had previously suggested that the church is the body of Christ, (Ephesians 1:22-23; 4:11-16) and is God’s temple, (Ephesians 2:19-22) and is the bride/wife of Christ. (Ephesians 5:21-33) In Ephesians 6, he talked about a call to arms, not to wage war, but to “wage peace.”
27. Paul warned us about the enemy that we face; he knew how difficult the challenge will be. But, he focused on the marvelous help that is available to us in Christ and the Holy Spirit.
28. After talking about the various effects that Christianity will have on individuals, we realize that:

[BSG:] Unity is realized only when we embrace our new identity and walk in Christ. This profound transformation in Christ will also affect all aspects of our human life, including our families (husbands, wives, and children), society (people groups and social classes), and our personal individual lives.—*Adult Teachers Sabbath School Bible Study Guide** 184.‡

29. Paul realized that the life and death of Jesus had and has a transforming impact on the world as God works through His church. This is something that had not been revealed to people in Old Testament times but was revealed in Paul’s generation.
30. Paul’s transformational experience on the road to Damascus changed him from a bigoted Pharisee to a world-traveling evangelist for Jesus Christ to the Gentiles. He placed his life on the line every day to speak of His love and what Jesus has done for all of us.

31. The end is coming. Both Paul and Ellen White point us forward to a marvelous future with God.

[EGW:] All the treasures of the universe will be open to the study of God's redeemed. Unfettered by mortality, they wing their tireless flight to worlds afar—worlds that thrilled with sorrow at the spectacle of human woe and rang with songs of gladness at the tidings of a ransomed soul. With unutterable delight the children of earth enter into the joy and the wisdom of unfallen beings. They share the treasures of knowledge and understanding gained through ages upon ages in contemplation of God's handiwork. With undimmed vision they gaze upon the glory of creation—suns and stars and systems, all in their appointed order circling the throne of Deity. Upon all things, from the least to the greatest, the Creator's name is written, and in all are the riches of His power displayed.

And the years of eternity, as they roll, will bring richer and still more glorious revelations of God and of Christ. As knowledge is progressive, so will love, reverence, and happiness increase. **The more men learn of God, the greater will be their admiration of His character.** As Jesus opens before them the riches of redemption and the amazing achievements in the great controversy with Satan, the hearts of the ransomed thrill with more fervent devotion, and with more rapturous joy they sweep the harps of gold; and ten thousand times ten thousand and thousands of thousands of voices unite to swell the mighty chorus of praise.

“And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, and honor, and glory, and power, be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever.” Revelation 5:13.

The great controversy is ended. Sin and sinners are no more. The entire universe is clean. One pulse of harmony and gladness beats through the vast creation. From Him who created all, flow life and light and gladness, throughout the realms of illimitable space. From the minutest atom to the greatest world, all things, animate and inanimate, in their unshadowed beauty and perfect joy, declare that God is love.—Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy** 677.3-678.3.†‡

32. Don't you want to be a part of that glorious plan? Is your church a vibrant one that shines a light to all around it? What are you doing to be a part of that?

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